



## CHAPTER 4

### INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

#### LEAD AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

In Indiana, trails are an important component of the overall outdoor recreation system. Many agencies work together to manage and develop trails. The trails are of various lengths, run through different environments and accommodate a multitude of outdoor activities from hiking and biking to snowmobiling and horseback riding. Trails are found in all types of parks. More recently, trails are being planned and developed to link community resources and other places of interest. In many cases, the trail itself is being created and marketed as a destination. As stated earlier, this plan intends to help coordinate varied entities and develop a statewide trail network that capitalizes on opportunities for public and private partnerships.

Trail use in Indiana is growing. The most popular outdoor recreation is walking, followed closely by biking. Other popular activities conducive to using trails include hiking, jogging, photography and bird watching. As technology advances, activities like mountain biking, inline skating, and ATV riding are increasing in popularity, placing greater demands on trail providers to increase opportunities and reduce conflicts between trail users. The following sections describe the various entities' roles in creating and maintaining trails for Indiana's citizens.

#### State Trail Providers

##### INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Supply and demand of trails continues to be a controversial topic across the country, and Indiana is a reflection of this. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Division of Outdoor Recreation provides trails on the ground as well as technical and financial support through grants.

Many of Indiana's nature preserves and all of Indiana's state parks, recreation areas and forests contain hiking trails and walking paths. Several properties provide horseback, touring bike and mountain bike trails. Joint ventures with the Indiana Mountain Bike Association are producing even more mountain bike opportunities in Indiana's state parks. Indiana's longest hiking trail, the 58 mile Knobstone Trail, is managed by the Division of Outdoor Recreation.

In 2003, Indiana opened the first state-owned off-high-



way vehicle park. Redbird State Riding Area is a 1,000-acre property on formerly mined land that provides over 30 miles of trail for 4-wheel drive vehicles, motor bikes, ATV's and other off-highway vehicles. This property is jointly managed by a non-profit corporation and the Division of Outdoor Recreation.

In northern Indiana, five snowmobile trails are maintained through cooperative agreements with local snowmobile clubs. The local clubs map out and maintain the trails while DNR provides technical assistance. The snowmobile program and trails are self-supporting with funds via snowmobile registration fees.

##### THE TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD

The acceptance of trails as an integral part of a community's infrastructure has significantly improved in recent years, but in some areas trail development continues to be a controversial issue. Federal, state, and local government agencies and private organizations across the state seek to improve public trail supply to meet the demand. At the state level, DNR's Division of Outdoor Recreation works with Indiana's Trails Advisory Board and other organizations to accomplish that goal.

Established in 1994, the Trails Advisory Board consists of 14 citizen volunteers that represent a variety of trail interests:

- all-terrain vehicle users
- pedestrians
- bicyclists



## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

- snowmobilers
- environmental groups
- soil and water conservation districts
- equestrians
- sportswomen and sportsmen
- four-wheel drive vehicle users
- trail support groups
- local park and recreation agencies
- users with disabilities
- off-road motorcyclists
- water trail users
- mountain bikers
- hikers

The Trails Advisory Board serves as the Department of Natural Resources' advisor on trail related issues and was responsible for developing Indiana Trails 2000, a state trails plan completed in 1996 that was developed by trail users for trail providers. Indiana Trails 2000 aimed to provide direction for trail development at the local, regional and state levels.

### INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in recent years has taken a much more active stance in developing trails. Previously, its main focus was on roads. Recently, INDOT has created the position of Greenways Coordinator and is working to develop a budget that will put trail miles on the ground. INDOT has also pledged to offer technical assistance to outside entities developing trails and to be a resource for agencies incorporating trails in their roadway designs.

In 2000, INDOT funded one of the first studies to examine and compare trails in Indiana. The Indiana Trails Study provided a reconnaissance study of use levels, user characteristics, management practices, economic factors and impacts to adjacent properties for selected trails in Indiana. Trails in Portage, Indianapolis, Goshen, Ft. Wayne, Muncie and Greenfield were examined. This study was immensely popular as it was the first of its kind in Indiana. Efforts are currently underway to repeat this study and expand it to cover more trails.



## Federal Trail Providers

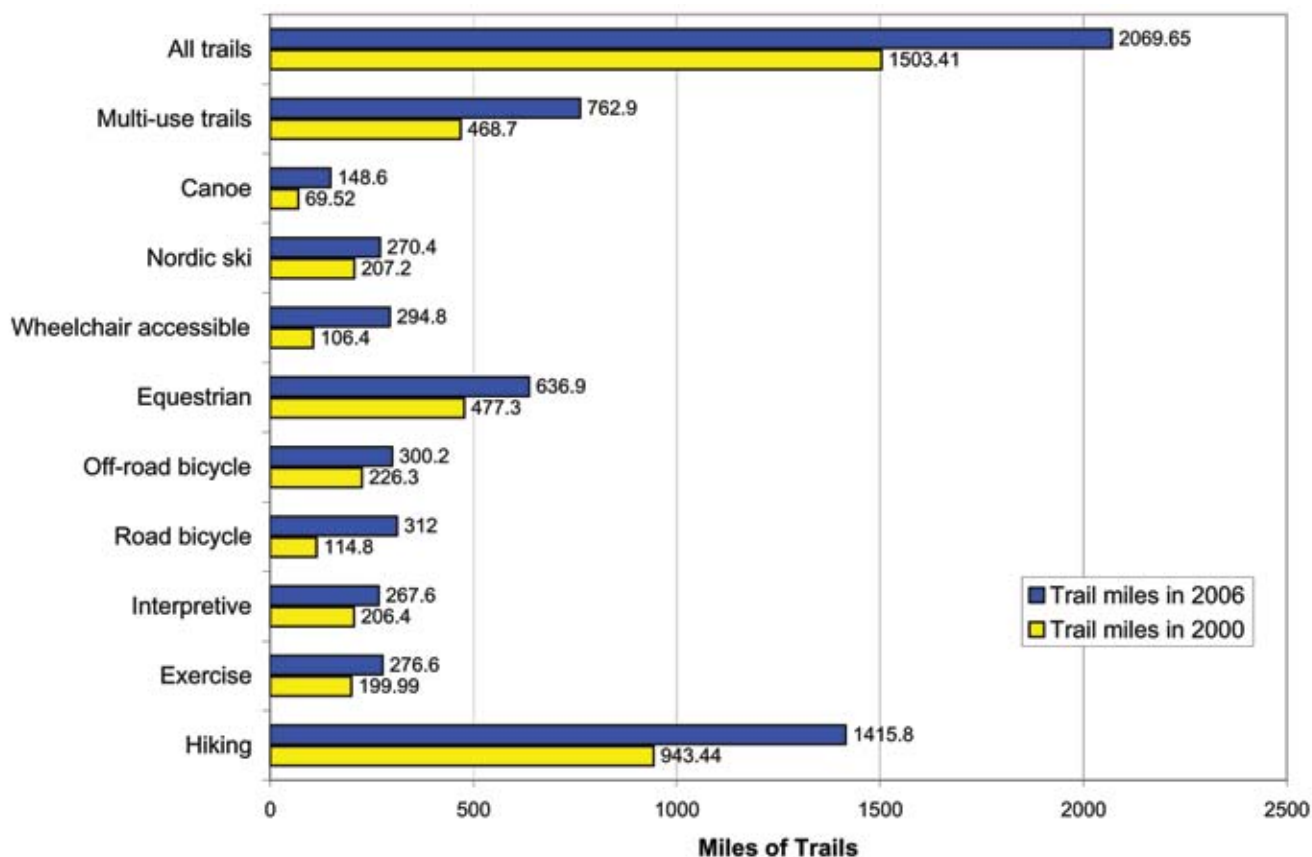
### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the National Park Service in communities across the United States by helping to create local, regional and state networks of parks, rivers, trails, greenways and open space in collaboration with community partners. In Indiana, RTCA has been actively engaged with state agencies, local governments, organizations and citizens since 1992 on a variety of projects. For more information on this program log onto [www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca) or to request assistance for your community/project, contact:

Rory Robinson, IN Projects Manager  
NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance  
2179 Everett Road, Peninsula, OH 44264  
(330) 657-2951, 2955-FAX  
[rory\\_robinson@nps.gov](mailto:rory_robinson@nps.gov)

The Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore provides hiking and walking opportunities. The park maintains over 45 miles of trails for visitor use. They are designed for specific and multiple purposes including hiking, cross-country skiing, bicycling, and horseback riding. There are no off-trail activities allowed on the National Lakeshore.

Features include inter-dunal ponds, marshes, stands of northern white cedars, forested dunes, fore dunes, and open beach. Forested watershed, reclaimed farmland, excellent bird watching and spring wildflowers are profiled along the trails. The north side of the river is a bird sanctuary and entry is prohibited. Horseback riders will enjoy the Ly-Co-Ki-We and Horse Trail with its moder-

**Change in number of non-motorized trail miles since 2000**

ate terrain and a series of loops, up to 6.4 miles. Horseback riding is permitted from March 16-December 14.

**US FOREST SERVICE**

The Hoosier National Forest provides trail opportunities year round to as many users as possible while protecting forest resources. Most trails are used by hikers, horse riders and mountain bikers. Their multiple use policy is based on the limited amount of land available for the development of new trails. The Hoosier National Forest provides 266 miles of trails of which 47 miles are single use (hiking) trails.

The Federal Recreation Enhancement Act has granted national forest the authority to charge a fee for trail use. Most of the funds collected are to be returned to the national forest for trail maintenance. Under this program, the high impact users, horse and bike riders, pay a \$3 daily or \$25 annual fee to ride trails. Users can purchase trail tags from local stores on a consignment basis.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES**

In Indiana, local governments are at the forefront of providing trails. While state and federal agencies provide trails associated with a large natural resource based

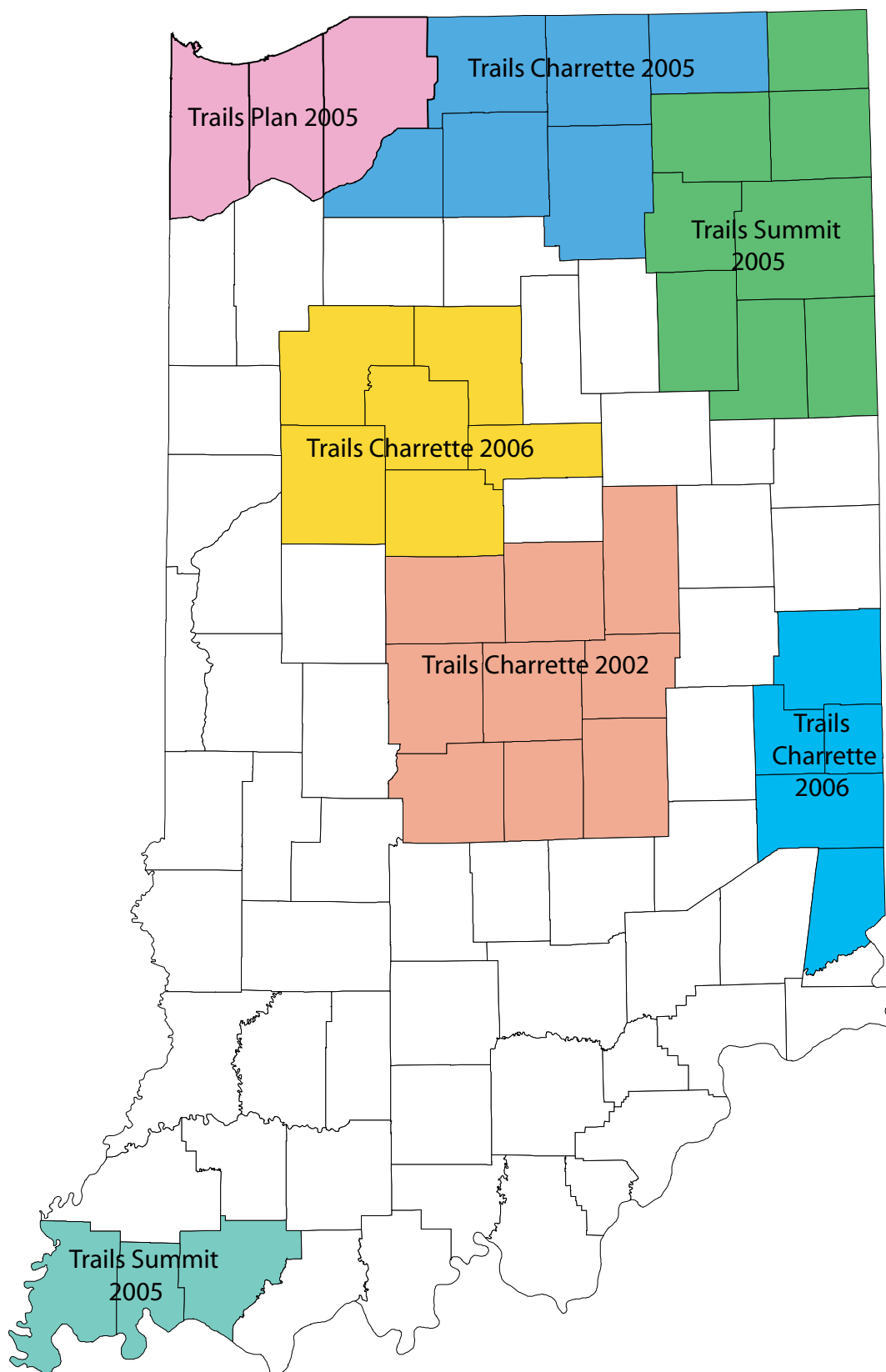
property, local agencies are providing the trails used day to day by Hoosiers. Trails that connect communities, stimulate economic development and provide opportunities to highlight quality of life exist in many, but not all, of Indiana's cities and towns. Virtually all of these trails have been developed and maintained by Indiana's municipal governments. In many cases, grant funds have made these trails a reality.

Local agencies have also taken the lead in developing creative ways to pay for trails. Local communities have crafted public private partnerships to leverage grant funding. In many cases, these partnerships have put miles of trails on the ground without the benefit of grants. Many of Indiana's premier community trails have been developed through partnerships with health organizations, community foundations and local benefactors.

Local agencies continue to manage trails for the benefit of their constituents, but funding for operating and maintaining trails is a constant concern. They continually develop new and more efficient ways of maintaining trail surfaces. In some cases, local ordinances require that land be set aside for recreation and trails. More progressive communities are also including long term maintenance in these requirements.



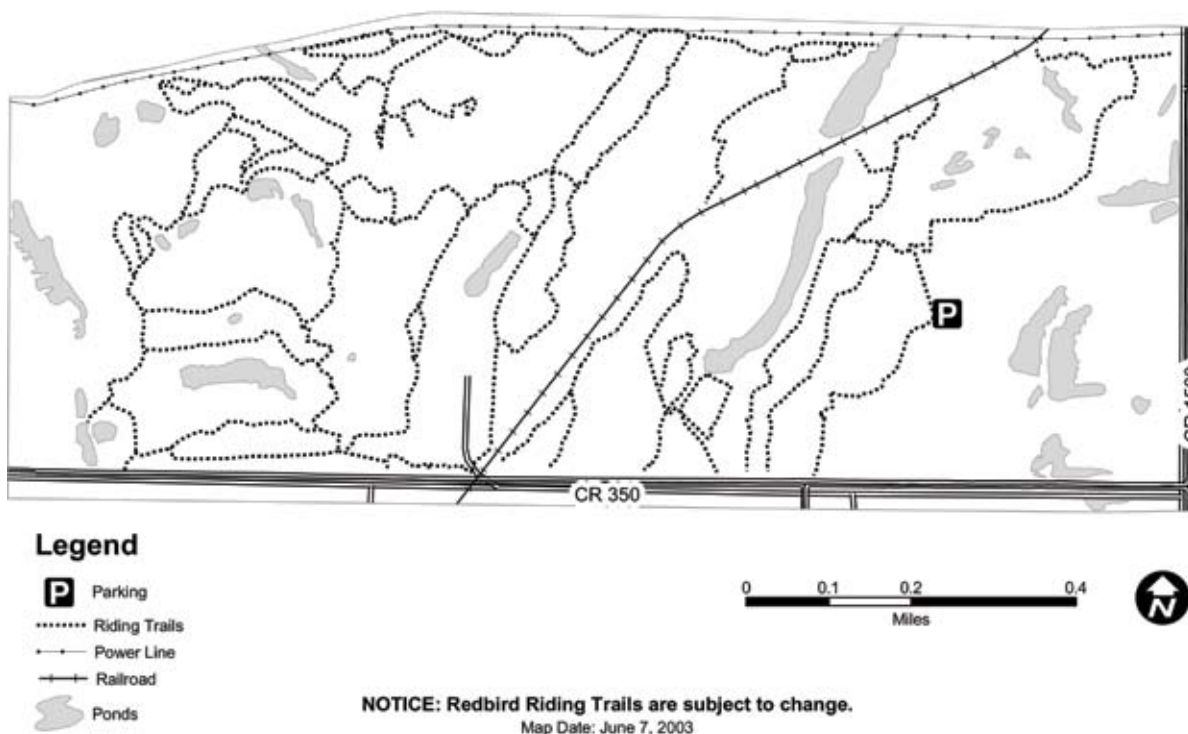
### Local regional planning efforts for trails







## Redbird State Riding Area



### NOT-FOR-PROFITS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Not-for-profits and privately-owned corporate entities have been the main driving force behind funding the development of trails in Indiana. Examples of statewide organizations that have benefited trails include the Greenways Foundation and the Indiana Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Countless other trails have been made possible through donated labor and materials garnered by grass roots organizations.

Many of Indiana's trails are maintained using both individual volunteers and groups dedicated to a particular trail. Taking care of trails offers individuals the opportunity to "give back" to the communities that have served them. People Pathways, the Friends of the Pumpkinvine and the Cardinal Greenway are all volunteer organizations that exist for the sole purpose of funding and maintaining a trail.

Many local businesses have developed trails through their properties to connect to existing trails and allow public access. Still more have located along trails as an added benefit. More businesses are realizing the value of trails for employees' physical and mental health. As a result, private and corporate trails are more numerous and need to be included in comprehensive trail plans. In addition, many developers realize that the incorporation of a trail system can help increase housing and office space values and/or increase sales.

### PROGRESS TOWARD DEVELOPING TRAILS IN INDIANA

In going forward with a new plan for trails in Indiana, it should prove helpful to look back and assess progress under the previous plan. The trails plan within Indiana SCORP 2000-2004 outlined five primary goals and a list of objectives to reach each goal.

Goal #1 was, "Acquire more land and waterways for trail use," and the first three objectives were very similar, calling for identification of suitable locations for trail development and acquiring land as necessary. Since 2000, several multi-county regional trail planning initiatives and discussions have taken place or are in process. As a result of local cooperative efforts, these multi-county regions are beginning to identify the best opportunities for creating regional trail systems. Regional efforts include a ten county area of central Indiana, the three county area covered by the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission, a ten county area of north central Indiana and southwest Michigan, a nine county area of northeast Indiana, a six county area of the Central Wabash River watershed, and a three county area in extreme southwest Indiana. Several long distance, corridor specific projects have also been proposed including the cross state National Road Heritage Trail from Terre Haute to Richmond and the Farm Heritage Trail from Indianapolis to Lafayette.

Objective 5 under Goal #1 was "Encourage legislation



## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

supporting rail-trails.” Use of former railroad corridors is often considered the ideal means to connect communities with trails. However, abandoned railroad corridors in Indiana have proven difficult to acquire for trail development. Court rulings have determined that railroads rarely had title ownership of land along the entire length of any of these corridors. According to Indiana law, land not owned in fee simple by the railroad reverts to original or adjacent landowners. Of special interest are three recent class action settlements involving former Penn Central, CSX, and Conrail railroad corridors. These settlements involved almost 2000 miles of former railroad corridor and resulted in only about 10% or 200 miles of corridor being favorable for acquisition from the railroad companies for trail development. Efforts to acquire land along these corridors have been met with limited success.

Railbanking, a means of preserving railroad corridors before they are abandoned, has been successfully used in recent years to acquire use of former railroad corridors for trail development. The Indiana Trails Fund has taken the lead in this effort by railbanking just over 100 miles of former railroad corridor. Local governments are also beginning to take interest in the pursuit of railbanking. Changes to Indiana Code 8-4.5 were proposed in the 2005 state legislative session that would have made it easier for the state to play a more proactive role in preserving railroad corridors that are proposed for abandonment. Some of the proposed changes passed, while others did not. A key proposal that did not pass was the right of first refusal by the state. One thing is clear, once abandoned, former railroad corridors diminish in opportunity for trail development. The railbanking process is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Another objective under Goal #1 was “Provide public areas for the legal operation of ATVs, motorcycles, and off-highway vehicles.” Redbird State Riding Area, the first state property open to off-road vehicle use, was opened in 2003 near the town of Dugger in Greene and Sullivan counties. Land acquisition and development continue at Redbird with a goal of reaching 1400 acres. Redbird Riding Area will eventually provide 70 miles of motorized off-road trails. Off-road vehicle riding is also being planned for the Interlake property near Lynnville in Warrick and Pike counties. The Interlake property consists of 3500 acres that will be developed and managed for multiple uses including hunting, fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking and off-road vehicle riding.

Providing public areas for the legal operation of off-road bicycles was another objective of Goal #1. In 2001, as a result of a mountain bike trail pilot project at Huntington Reservoir, the Natural Resources Commission approved of the regulated use of mountain bikes on Department of Natural Resource (DNR) properties. Shortly afterward, DNR Division of Forestry approved of the use of mountain bikes on five forestry properties. In 2005, mountain bike trail development was approved at Brown County State Park and Versailles State Park. The Hoosier National Forest expanded mountain bike opportunities by constructing a new 12.7 mile multi-use trail around Spring Valley Lake. Local public agencies, often with support from mountain bike organizations, have also added a number of mountain bike trails including state of the art trails recently completed at Westwood Park in Henry County. The International Mountain Bicycling Association has raised the grade of Indiana from a D- to a C+, stating that there is still a lack of close to home mountain bike riding opportunities near urban centers.

Goal #2 was “Develop trail networks that allow for multiple uses and promote alternative transportation.” The first of five objectives was to support legislation furthering the development of multi-use trail networks. As previously mentioned, in 2005 changes were made to Indiana Code 8-4.5 that could make it less difficult for the state to participate in preserving rail corridors that are proposed for abandonment. However, the right of first refusal for the state was not adopted and IC 8-4.5 still contains a number of provisions that are considered obstacles to trail development.

The second objective under Goal #2 was to identify existing and potential trail connection opportunities.





One way this objective is being achieved is through the regional trail planning initiatives discussed under Goal #1. As existing and planned trails are identified, they are added to the Indiana trails inventory. The trails inventory serves to identify the framework for a statewide trail system and provides much of the basis for the maps presented in the remainder of this document. The inventory is also available on the Web.

Also under Goal #2 was an objective to develop a network of existing roads for recreational use and alternative transportation. This objective is being achieved in two ways. For off-road motorized vehicle use, DNR developed a Web site that identifies which counties allow registered off-road motorized vehicles on county roads. For bicyclists, DNR developed a Web site that identifies which counties are served by some type of established bicycle route system. The Indiana Department of Transportation is taking a lead role in promoting alternative transportation by currently working on a state bicycle plan that will cover bicycle routes throughout Indiana.

Goal #3 called for design, construction and maintenance standards. While there have been no statewide efforts to develop such standards, a good deal of work has occurred at the local and national level. In 2001, the U.S. Department of Transportation released a best practices design guide entitled *Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access* that incorporates the latest in American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and ADA standards. In 2002, the National Recreation and Park Association published *OHV Park Guidelines* in association with the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council. In 2004, the International Mountain Bicycling Association published *Trail Solutions*, a guide to design and construction of mountain bike trails that can also be applied to other natural surface trails. In 2005, The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy developed a publication that details maintenance and operation of rail-trails based upon a survey of 100 rail-trails. An equestrian design guide is also being pursued through the Federal Highway Administration and should be ready for distribution in 2006. Instead of developing separate standards for Indiana, it makes more sense to publicize availability of these existing resources.

Goal #4 was concerned with providing information on trail systems. One objective under this goal called for the use of current technology to provide information about trails. The Indiana Trails Inventory developed by the Department of Natural Resources is taking advantage of the latest in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Web-based programs to make information readily available about all of the existing and planned trails across Indiana. The Hoosier Rails-to-Trails Council also does a very good job of providing Web-based information about Indiana trails. Internet trail information sites are becoming even more useful as links are provided to Web sites that are being developed by managing entities of local trails. As trail systems develop, managing entities also tend to create printed trail guides which address another objective of Goal #4.

Another objective of Goal #4 was to develop a trail rating system to inform users of trail difficulty. The Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP), developed by Beneficial Designs, has been available nationwide for almost a decade. UTAP is intended to standardize information about levels of difficulty and accessibility across all trails. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources took early steps toward implementing UTAP including purchase of necessary equipment and software and training of a handful of staff. However, UTAP was never fully implemented due to the excessive man hours needed for implementation and the perception that the benefits of UTAP did not warrant making implementation a priority.

Also under Goal #4 was the objective of promoting responsible trail use. There are two national organizations devoted to trail stewardship and responsible trail use, Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly!. National, state and local trail user group organizations all tend to adopt and promote these principles. The 2003 Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference in Indianapolis also featured an education session on trail stewardship. It would appear responsible trail use is being promoted to trail users involved with trail organizations. In order to reach all trail users, including those not formally involved with trail organization, responsible trail use is often promoted through signage on trails and information within brochures and Web sites.

Ensuring long-term trail management planning was the focus of Goal #5. Objectives stressed the need for trail management funding and use of volunteers. Dedicated state funds from off-road vehicle and snowmobile vehicle registrations have made it possible to develop and maintain trails for motorized vehicle recreation. Other types of trail development rely predominantly upon federal funds through the U.S. Department of Transportation, but virtually no state or federal funding is available for local trail management and maintenance. A number of local trails have established "adopt-a-trail" programs including Cardinal Greenway and Indy Parks Greenways. Some trails, such as the Cardinal Greenway, depend almost exclusively upon volunteers for trail maintenance. Other trails, such as Delphi Historic Trails, utilize volunteers for both trail construction and maintenance. Management of the Redbird State Riding Area is accomplished through a contract with volunteers from off-road vehicle groups. State snowmobile trails rely heavily upon snowmobile club volunteers for trail construction and maintenance. Hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians are also well known in Indiana for their organizations' involvement with trail maintenance and construction.

Using the 2000-2004 Indiana Trails Plan as a guide, significant accomplishments were achieved for Indiana trails. Pertinent goals and objectives from the previous trails plan that were not fully achieved are included in this new plan.

## FUNDING FOR TRAILS

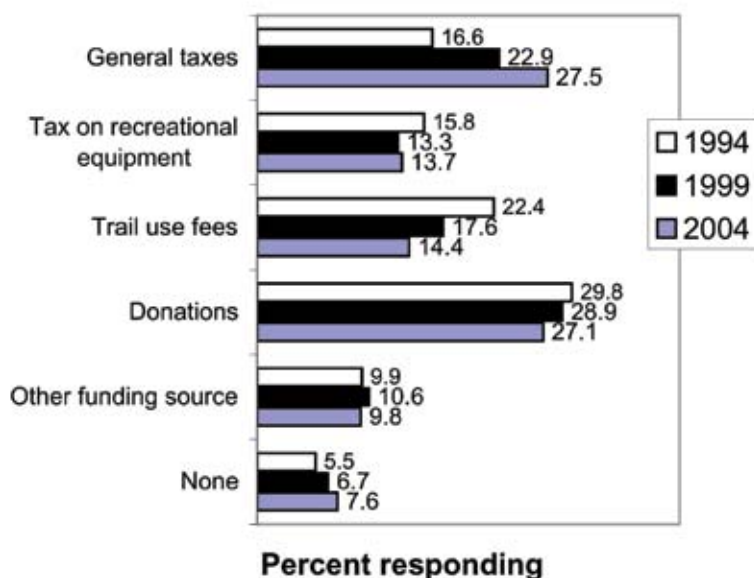
Funding for trail development and acquisition has been





## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

**Of the following, which do you feel should be the primary source of funding for the development of recreational trails?**



*Indiana Trail Users Survey, 1994, 1999, 2004*

and will continue to be an issue. Prioritizing trail construction in federal, state and local agency budgets remains a challenge since trails are often rated nonessential. This is especially true when they compete with all other governmental spending. Creative funding for trail projects is essential. Knowing the options and combinations of funding opportunities assures that trail projects become a reality. This section will examine governmental grants and other funding options available for trail projects.

Not-for-profit organizations and private groups have always been at the forefront of developing trails and continue to be important funding sources. Local community clubs, associations and auxiliaries are actively trying to improve the quality of life in their respective communities. These groups view trails as one aspect of community enhancement. Some not-for-profits are established specifically for trail development in specific counties, communities or corridors such as the Cardinal Greenway, Inc.; Pumpkinvine Trail, Inc.; and the Rail Corridor Development, Inc. They may not provide financing directly but are set up to collect then distribute funds to build projects. Statewide not-for-profits like the Indiana Trails Fund and the Indiana Greenways Foundation can act as funding agents as well as land holding agents for trail projects needing an interim entity to pursue state or federal grants. The Trust for Public Land, a national not-for-profit for land preservation, acquires greenways.

Tapping into the private health community has a direct correlation to trails. Hospital foundations have sponsored trail projects in the state and potentially could play a much greater role in trail building. Health centers and some health insurance companies are looking at ways to lower health costs. The direct link of physical exercise/

trail use and health is proven.

Some trail programs will match funds with volunteer labor, land or material donations. Carpenters, architects, engineers or planners willing to donate their services to a project can become a part of the funding source for matching monies with grants. Other donation opportunities exist through private businesses, sororities and fraternal organizations, neighborhood associations, individuals, bequests from estates, community service workers, retirees, school and church groups, local scouting organizations, university interns or prison work crews providing matching sources or the physical labor of just plain getting the trail on the ground.

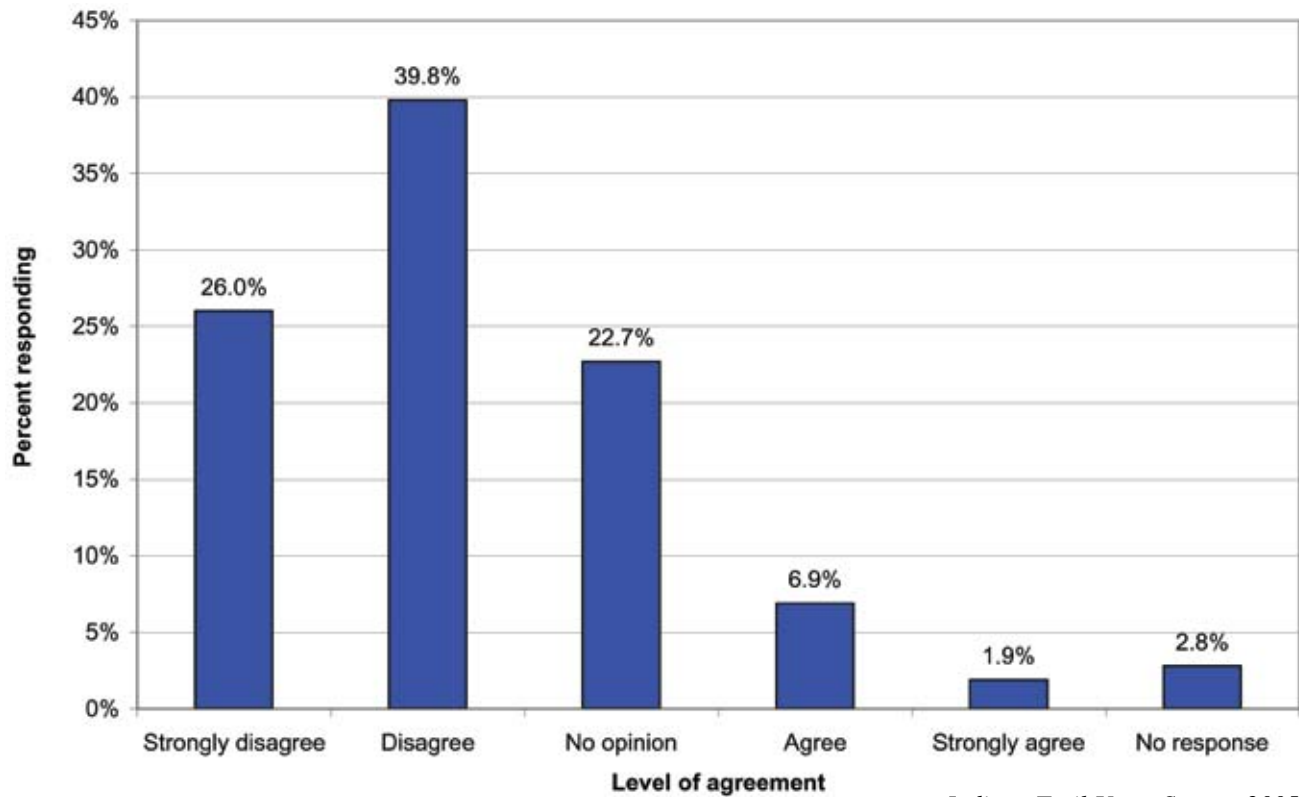
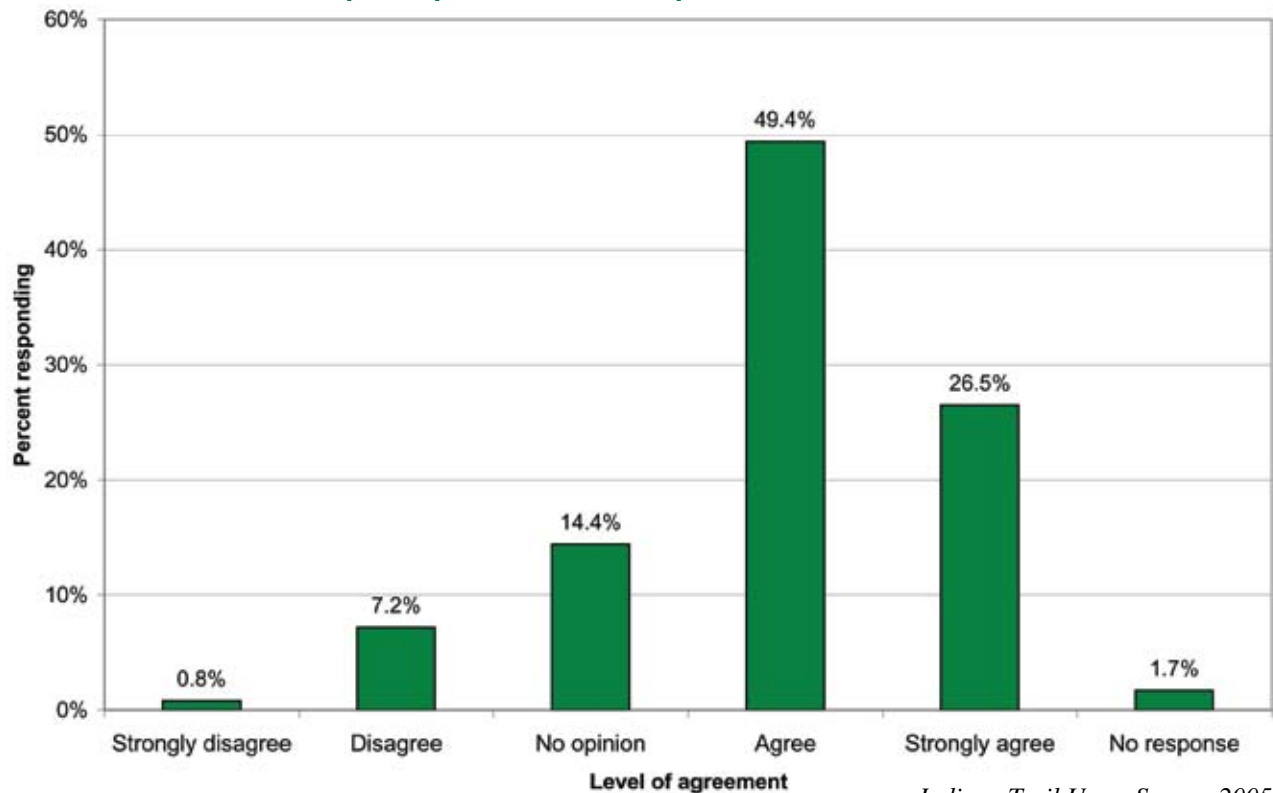
Community or county foundations fund a variety of projects which could and do include trails and greenways. They can also serve to foster public/private partnerships. Another possible partnership strategy is to create green infrastructure through utility companies that have an interest and are willing to accommodate a utility corridor being used for a trail or vice versa.

More and more above ground electric utilities are becoming amenable to allowing trails in their corridors and are even willing to donate fiscally to the project. Underground utilities on corridors can help secure the property and fund above ground development with lease or easement payments for fiber optics, sewer, water, gas etc. These payments could be used for capitol improvements or maintenance on a trail project. In some cases allowing utilities under (and over) trail corridors could be an opportunity for the trail to be built at no expense to the trail provider. Combining green infrastructure (trails) with existing or planned infrastructure is a win /win opportunity.

Tax Increment Finance (TIF), Cumulative Capital Development (CCDF), County Optional Income Tax (COIT), County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT), Cumulative Capital Improvement Fund (CCIF), Motor Vehicle Highway Account (MVH), Local Road and Street Account (LR&S), Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT) and Non-Reverting Thoroughfare Development Fund (NRTDF) are financial avenues open to trail projects. Gaming Boat revenue could be employed for trails in eligible counties. Local entities can speak to their local elected officials on the possibility of using any of these funds for trail development and/or matching of grants available for that purpose. Trail impact fees are being established for trail development by communities around the state. These funds are being used directly to finance trails as well as incentives for developers to build trails when they are constructing their projects.

## STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) ad-

**Current funding for trail development in Indiana is adequate.***Indiana Trail Users Survey, 2005.***There should be state tax incentives to individual citizens and public utilities for their participation in land acquisition for trails.***Indiana Trail Users Survey, 2005.*





## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

ministers multiple programs on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that relate directly to trail/greenway development. Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is the current highways bill in which these programs are funded. All projects funded through this federal money must be programmed in the State's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and those in urbanized areas must also be in their respective Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) TIP.

Transportation Enhancements (TE): Is a provision of the Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) that requires states to set aside 10 percent of their share of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds for projects that enhance the existing transportation system. States have the flexibility to design a program to best suit their needs within the limits of the law. This program was continued and somewhat expanded under, TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) and under the current transportation bill. This program is an 80/20% matching fund. There are 12 eligible categories within TE that relate to surface transportation and 4 of those relate specifically to bicycle/pedestrian activities. Those categories are 1. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities, 2. Pedestrian and bicycle safety and education, 3. Preservation of abandoned railroad corridors, 4. Historic transportation building, structures, and facilities (places historic bridges on bike/ped systems).

Indiana's TE program funds transportation projects that expand beyond the traditional accommodations for cars, trucks, buses and transit. This fund is Indiana's largest funding source for trails/greenways projects. TE funding is a cost reimbursement program and not a grant. The sponsor must pay at least 20 percent of a project's cost to show commitment by the local group or community. Applicants may receive reimbursement for eligible costs as work is completed. TE strengthens the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the nation's intermodal transportation system.

Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ), an 80/20 federal funding program is only available in urbanized areas (ar-

reas exceeding population of 50,000) designated by the US EPA as NOT meeting current air quality standards for various pollutants. Six areas in Indiana currently qualify. Key considerations for projects funded with this source are improving air quality and being able to document that positive impact. The MPOs evaluate all sorts of projects that help air quality. As a result transit projects, ride-sharing projects, certain signal upgrade projects, ozone alert projects, etc., provide competition for limited funds. Candidate projects are annually submitted to and evaluated by INDOT in a statewide application process.

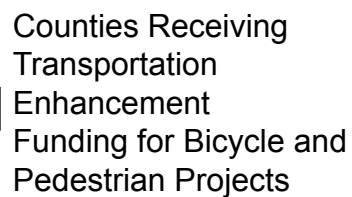
Safe Routes to School (SR2S): A new federal funding source that was created specifically to encourage and improve the safety of children walking and bicycling to and from school. There are limitations on the use of these funds. They target only elementary and middle schools (K-8), not high schools. Improvements need to be located within two miles of the intended schools. Schools can

### Transportation Enhancements Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects by County as of 2006

Allen	\$3,927,116	Lagrange	\$1,000,000
Bartholomew	\$2,687,569	Lake	\$15,528,720
Boone	\$845,000	LaPorte	\$950,000
Brown	\$1,272,000	Madison	\$2,284,481
Cass	\$960,000	Marion	\$17,085,154
Clark	\$5,417,000	Marshall	\$1,000,001
Daviess	\$545,000	Martin	\$1,000,000
Dearborn	\$2,476,197	Miami	\$1,950,000
Delaware*	\$13,519,592	Monroe	\$8,082,610
Dubois	\$1,347,597	Montgomery	\$800,001
Elkhart	\$3,904,146	Morgan	\$1,000,000
Floyd	\$340,000	Ohio	\$561,690
Fountain	\$2,045,885	Pike	\$300,000
Franklin	\$85,000	Porter	\$7,083,001
Gibson	\$16,000	Putnam	\$1,375,327
Grant	\$1,400,000	Scott	\$1,000,000
Hamilton	\$4,136,000	St. Joseph	\$1,548,000
Hancock	\$480,000	Steuben	\$2,000,000
Harrison	\$836,678	Tippecanoe	\$2,328,790
Hendricks	\$5,915,100	Vanderburgh	\$6,310,915
Henry	\$1,400,000	Various	\$500,000
Howard	\$765,912	Vigo	\$2,664,771
Jay	\$560,000	Warrick	\$3,500,000
Jefferson	\$1,000,000	Wayne	\$2,654,545
Johnson	\$1,000,000	Wells	\$1,734,000
Knox	\$1,000,000	White	\$720,000
Kosciusko	\$1,460,000	Whitley	\$500,000

\*includes multi-county funding

**Grand Total \$144,803,798**







## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

Recreational Trails Funding by County by Year			
County	Trail Miles	Grant Amount	Year
Adams	3.5	\$150,000.00	2005
Allen	0.85	\$150,000.00	2005
Boone	1	\$62,800.00	1999
Brown	10	\$150,000.00	2005
Cass	1.3	\$150,000.00	2002
Clark	3.2	\$44,000.00	1996
Dearborn	3	\$65,870.00	1999
Delaware	3	\$87,100.00	2000
Elkhart	0.92	\$87,100.00	2000
Elkhart	0.66	\$150,000.00	2002
Franklin	2.6	\$150,000.00	2005
Grant	2	\$150,000.00	2001
Grant	3	\$150,000.00	2002
Grant	3	\$113,470.00	1997
Greene		\$174,200.00	2000
Greene		\$300,000.00	2003
Greene		\$280,836.00	2004
Greene	26	\$255,103.00	2005
Greene		\$99,530.00	1998
Hamilton	0.25	\$14,436.00	1996
Hamilton	3	\$100,000.00	1998
Hamilton	3	\$100,000.00	1999
Hancock	2	\$150,000.00	2005
Hendricks	1.8	\$119,841.94	2003
Hendricks	1	\$100,000.00	1996
Howard	1.5	\$143,913.00	2004
Howard	1.7	\$100,000.00	1999
Huntington	3	\$67,682.00	1994
Jefferson	1	\$88,000.00	1999
Knox	0.75	\$38,486.00	1997
Kosciusko	1	\$100,000.00	1999
Lake	0.6	\$150,000.00	2001
Lake	0.53	\$76,072.27	2002
Lake	0.3	\$100,000.00	1998
LaPorte	1	\$87,100.00	2000
LaPorte	2.6	\$150,000.00	2004
LaPorte	1.5	\$100,000.00	1998
Lawrence	10	\$69,680.00	2000
Lawrence		\$150,000.00	2001
Marion	0.75	\$65,000.00	1998
Miami	2.6	\$150,000.00	2004
Montgomery	3	\$150,000.00	2003
Porter	0.8	\$150,000.00	2004
Porter	0	\$59,200.00	1996
Posey	1.5	\$150,000.00	2003
Putnam	1.28	\$144,188.00	2003
Scott	1.1	\$71,096.25	2000
St. Joseph	0.5	\$100,000.00	1999
Steuben	1.6	\$113,470.00	1997
Sullivan		\$78,018.38	2001
Sullivan		\$225,459.55	2002
Tippecanoe	0.83	\$87,100.00	2000
Vanderburgh	2	\$148,470.00	2004
Wayne	3.4	\$100,000.00	1996
Whitley	2.6	\$82,042.89	2001
Administration costs	0	\$20,000.00	2005
Administration costs	0	\$7,993.00	1996
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$6,677,258.28</b>	

be public or private.

There is no match requirement for these funds. There should be a demonstrable positive effect on the numbers of children biking or walking to school. Most of the available funds (70%-90%) would be directed toward construction projects, while a smaller amount (10%-30%) is required to be directed toward education, en-

couragement and enforcement efforts (non-construction projects). These projects can have secondary beneficiaries, such as area residents, employees or adults walking and biking in the vicinity of the school, but the primary targets are schoolchildren. Secondary impacts on school children are insufficient to justify a project.

**Transit Enhancement Funds:** This is a general category of funds administered by the Federal Transit Administration; it is not a specific program. Transit funds in general improve or promote better access to public transportation (e.g., bus or rail). Near transit stops or along corridors used frequently by transit vehicles there may be opportunities to improve transit use that would, at the same time, make it easier or safer to walk or bike. For example, sidewalk improvements near transit stops will improve access for transit users but also enable people who are not catching the bus to walk more safely. Transit funds can be used to purchase bike racks for buses or to install bicycle racks and bike lockers at transit centers. The objective is to make it more convenient to use transit and that remains the primary purpose of transit funds. Pedestrians and bicyclists would be secondary beneficiaries.

**National Scenic Byway (NBS):** This discretionary grant program makes federal funding available for 8 project types that directly benefit designated byways. Among eligible uses are projects that improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and access along the byways and to important byway-related resources in the corridor. The 80-20 federal funds in this program are required to contribute directly to the byway and the experience of byway travelers and not simply in an incidental way. Indiana has two nationally designated byways and one state-designated byway. These funds are not available outside the byway corridors. Once a year NSB applications are submitted to the state DOT, thoroughly reviewed and forwarded to FHWA for consideration under a national merit-based program. Walkways, curb ramps, crosswalk treatments, bicycle racks, trail facilities and rest stops that are readily available and intended for byway travelers are examples of improvements benefiting cyclists and pedestrians.





**Indiana Recreational Trails Program (RTP):** This 80/20 matching program is intended to develop and maintain nonmotorized and motorized recreational trails. Originally called the National Recreation Trails Trust Fund Program, this money comes from federal motor fuel excise taxes paid by users of motorized off-highway vehicles. In Indiana, this fund is administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. By legislation, at least thirty percent of the funds are to be used for non-motorized trails, and at least thirty percent of the funds are to be used for motorized trails. The remaining forty percent is discretionary for diversified trail uses and education.

To date, RTP has provided more than \$4.9 million for trail projects including Indiana's first publicly owned motorized vehicle riding area, Redbird State Riding Area. Since its inception in 1995, RTP has put over 100 miles of trail on the ground, helping to create safer, more livable communities through the development of walking, hiking, equestrian, mountain bicycling, bicycling, off-road motorized, and water trails.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** This is a 50/50 matching program administered by the IDNR through the National Park Service, Department of Interior. The program is for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation areas. Trails are one priority of this program in Indiana.

**Indiana Heritage Trust (IHT):** This state land acquisition program was established to preserve land and among the priorities is greenways acquisition. Matching requirements vary with the program. Funds come from the sale of the environmental license plate and sometimes from legislative appropriations

## PLANNING

Local trail planners should contact INDOT with trail projects that follow along, cross over or go under a road project to examine if the trail costs can be incorporated into the road project. One example would be a tunnel design that could include an existing or potential trail corridor to be installed with the road project. It is essential that trail plans exist and INDOT is contacted as early as possible when planning road projects so trails can be accommodated. To create a trails master plan dollars specifically targeted for planning are available from Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars through the Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs. Communities and counties must qualify under certain factors to be eligible for these monies.

**Transportation and Community and System Preservation (TCSP):** This discretionary funding source

through FHWA is usually 100% monies requested through elected congressional officials. Trails are one eligible aspect of this program.

Planning for the long term life of a trail is also a key funding concern. Maintenance partnerships become increasingly important as a trail ages. Entities managing trails are establishing endowments addressing long term maintenance needs. Volunteer groups who construct trails may be used to maintain them. City/county agencies can investigate which agency is best suited to cost effectively maintain the trail. Proper plant species, low mow or no mow practices limit the amount of fossil fuels used. The possibility of utility corridors with a trail maintained by the utility is another option. With the limited amount of trail funding opportunities for development it is essential that alternative methods of managing trails be explored to the fullest extent. Creating sustainable trails should be incorporated into trail design and construction.

## INDIANA TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLANNING BOARD

This section is taken from the 2003 report of the Transportation Corridor Planning Board.

The Transportation Corridor Planning Board (TCPB) was established by Public Law 40-1995 that created Indiana Code 8-4.5.3. These statutes require the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to annually submit the following to the TCPB:

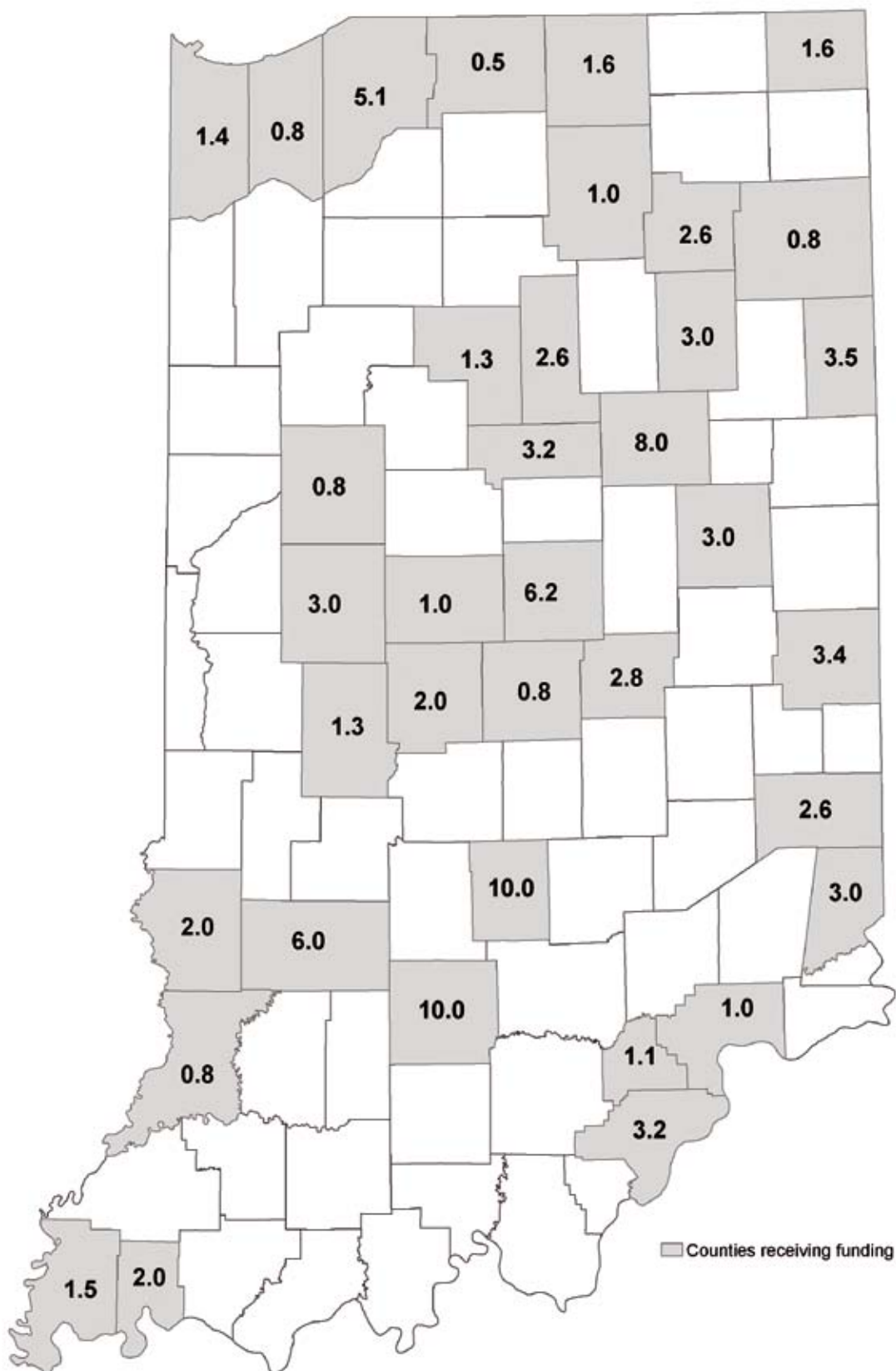
1. A list of existing rights-of-way that might be abandoned during the following year.
2. Priorities for potential future uses of rights-of-way consistent with INDOT's comprehensive transportation plan and IDNR's trail system plan.

Indiana Code also requires INDOT and IDNR to prepare an annual report that meets with the approval of the TCPB.



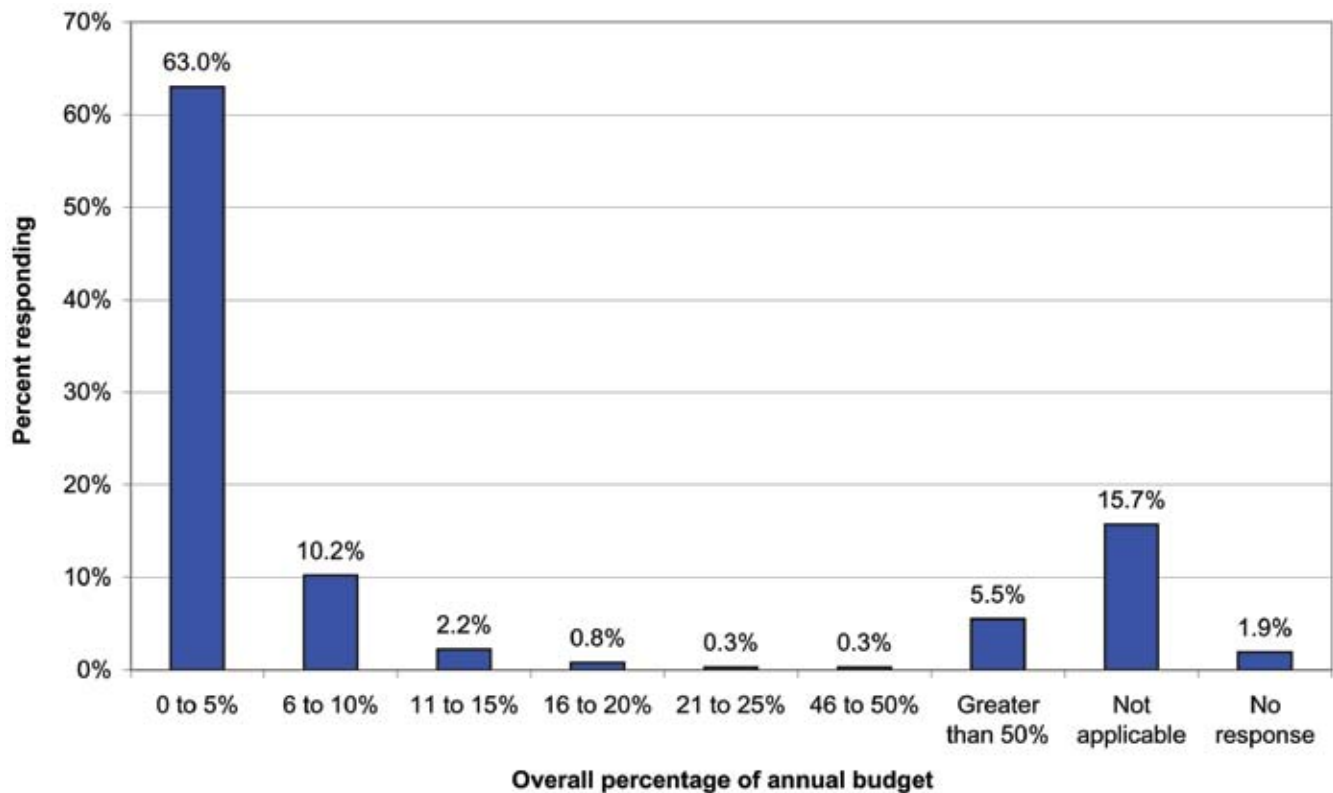


**Miles of trail funded by the Recreational Trail Program by county**



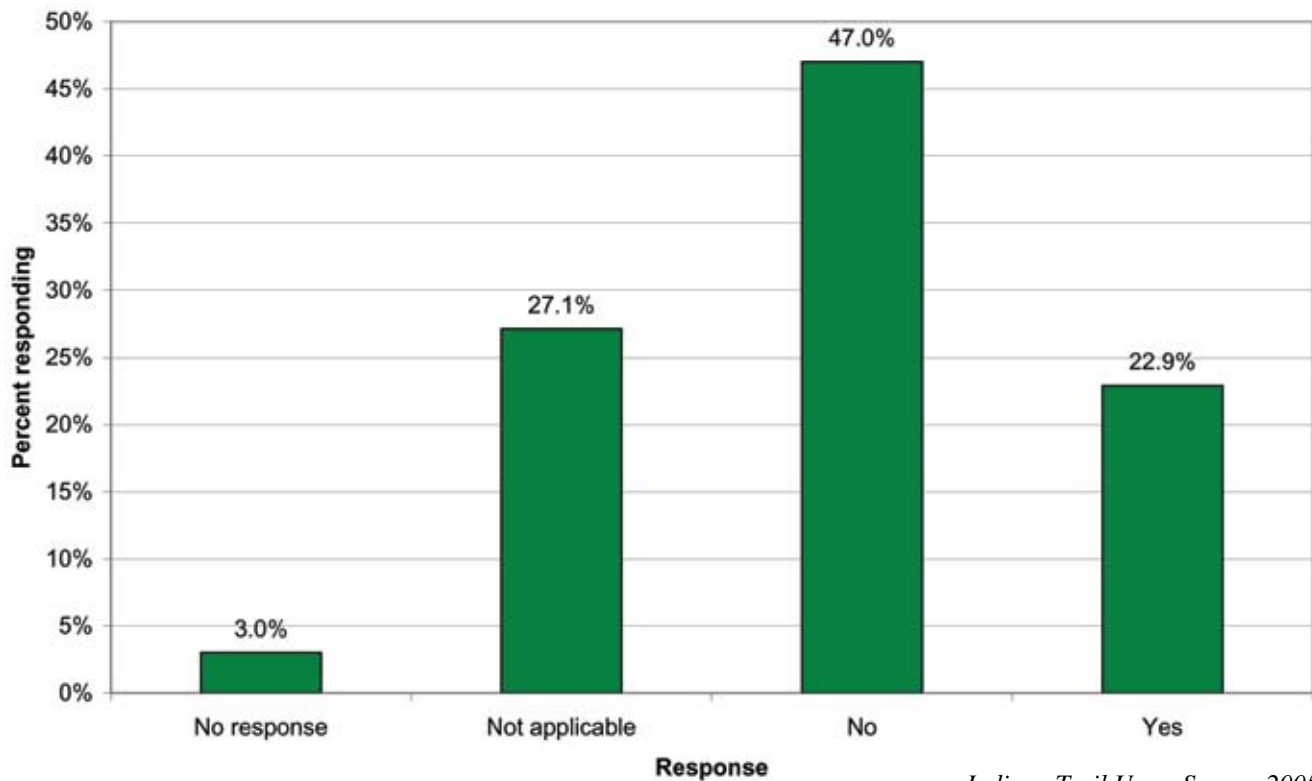


**What approximate percentage of your total annual operating budget is used for trails?**



*Indiana Trail Users Survey, 2005*

**Does your organization have a long term plan for funding trail maintenance and management?**



*Indiana Trail Users Survey, 2005*



## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

The 2003 report included the following information:

1. A description of the rights-of-way abandoned during the previous year;
2. A TCPB approved version of the list of existing rights-of-way that might be abandoned during the following year;
3. A TCPB approved version of the prioritized list of potential future uses for the rights-of-way consistent with INDOT's comprehensive transportation plan and IDNR's trail system plan;
4. A list of any property purchased under the program outlined in IC 8-4.5;
5. Sources of funding for the program outlined in IC 8-4.5-3-7 otherwise known as the Transportation Corridor Fund; and
6. Other information that the TCPB considers relevant.

The 2003 report found that railroads seeking to abandon a line through the exemption process (fast track abandonment with little oversight from the Surface Transportation Board (STB)) are not required to file system diagram maps. Sixteen of Indiana's seventeen abandonments since 1995 were filed under the exemption process and never appeared on a system diagram map. System diagram maps are, therefore, poor indicators of future railroad line abandonment activity.

Under the exemption process, the first official indication of a railroad's plans to abandon a line comes in the form of a request for environmental and historical review. These requests are usually made only a month or two in advance of an official exemption notice. Once the exemption notice is filed, the line can be abandoned within 45 days. Relying only on the methods suggested by IC 8-4.5 to identify potential abandonment candidates could mean that the state would have as few as 75 days to react before a rail right-of-way is lost.

A better source of tracking the operating status of active lines is to look at the railroad's broader plans for rationalization of its system, rather than specific indications about particular lines. Rationalization activities encompass potential abandonments, but also include lines whose operational characteristics might change through a line sale, shortline spin-off, trackage rights assignment, or operating lease. Therefore, clues to rationalization are better indicators of which lines the state should watch for potential preservation activities.

In addition, the State of Indiana has a broader inter-

est in corridor preservation than simply preserving right-of-way after lines have been abandoned. Preservation of active lines through shortline development or, in rare cases, contested abandonment applications, may be the best way to ensure that Indiana's long-term transportation interests are protected. It is, therefore, important that INDOT and the TCPB remain informed about railroad company rationalizations.

INDOT and IDNR reviewed and prioritized a list based on a process recommended by Parsons Brinkerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. as part of the Indiana Rail Corridor Preservation Study completed in Feb. 2003. The departments first evaluated the perceived level of threat to the line, the likelihood that the operating characteristics of a line would change. Relative threat level was gauged on factors such as traffic volumes, levels of service, a line's "fit" with the perceived long term system and the service goals of the owning railroad, freight customer contacts, conversations with the owning railroads, maintenance of the line, and monitoring industry publications and conferences. Once threat level was determined, INDOT and IDNR assigned a need level to each line in accordance with their long-range plans. The threat and need levels were then considered jointly by the Departments to develop a final ranking and proposed preservation use as required by IC 8-4.5-3.

To date, no property has been purchased by either INDOT or IDNR under the program outlined in IC 8-4.5. According to the report prepared by Parsons Brinkerhoff: "The Indiana process is cumbersome and inflexible. The time needed to complete the process takes longer than the current federal process of the Surface Transportation Board which oversees all the rail line acquisitions and abandonments. The current Indiana process (required by the statute) has thus precluded the State of Indiana from taking the necessary steps to acquire rail corridors due to the fact that the federal abandonment process is usually complete and corridor "lost" before the prescribed state process for corridor preservation can be completed."

The TCPB, INDOT and IDNR have recommended that new state legislation be considered to revise the acquisition process for rail corridors in a way that allows INDOT and IDNR to work within the federal abandonment deadlines. Such legislation should:

1. Grant INDOT first right of refusal on abandoned rail corridors.
2. Authorize INDOT and IDNR to engage in negotiations with railroads for the purchase of active and abandoned rail corridors.
3. Give INDOT and IDNR a means to acquire a fee simple interest in these corridors through expedited eminent domain if the purchase cannot be negotiated.
4. Require INDOT and IDNR to meet annually with the railroads serving the state to assess their status and discuss any issues that might need attention. This will allow staff to annually update

## MATRIX CLASSIFICATION

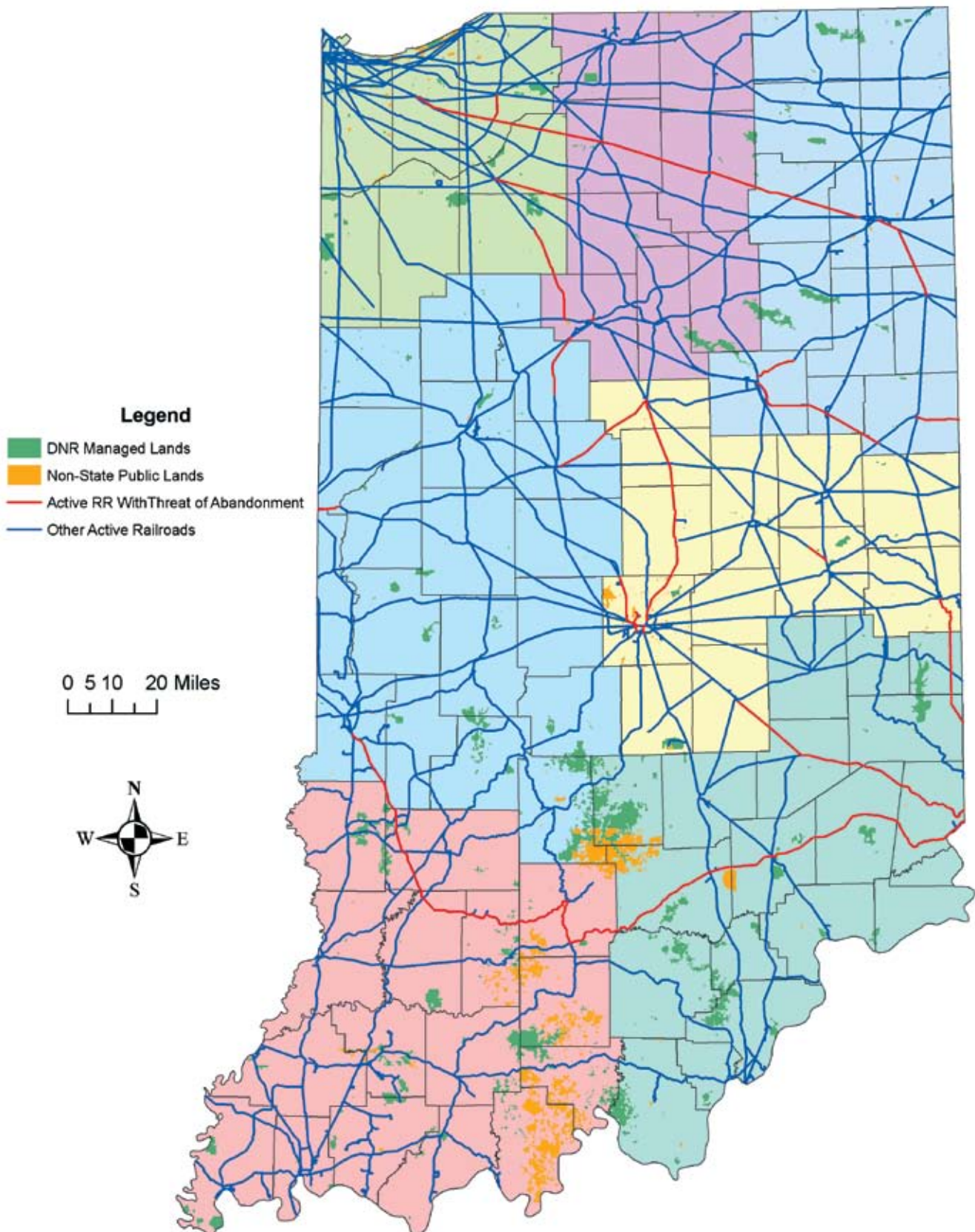
### RAIL CORRIDOR "NEED VS. THREAT" CRITERIA

		LOW	MEDUIM	HIGH
THREAT	LOW			
	MEDUIM			
	HIGH			





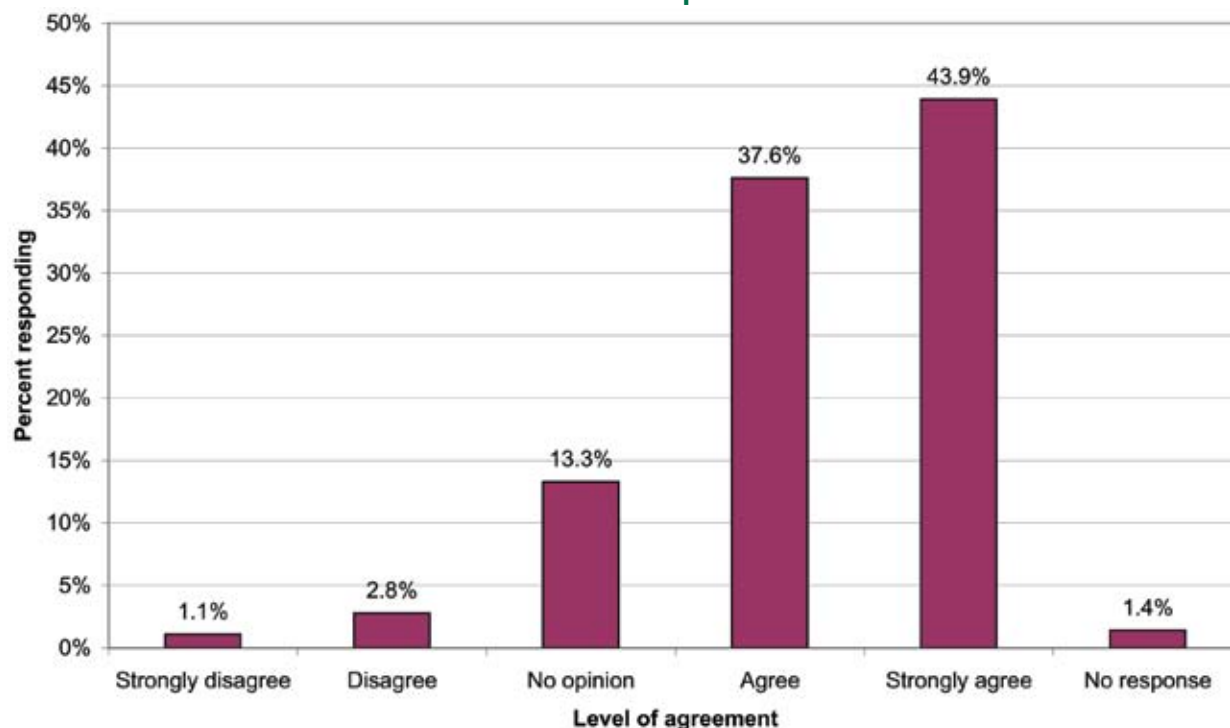
Active railroads in Indiana (INDOT, 2005)





## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

**There should be state legislation that supports the acquisition of former railroad corridors for the development of trails.**



the list of rail corridors that might be rationalized during the coming year.

5. Require that INDOT and IDNR, in consultation with affected state and local agencies, annually prepare a master list of rail corridors for preservation.
6. Modify the role of the TCPB to an advisory body, eliminating the requirement that the Board approve proposed corridor acquisitions.
7. Modify requirements for public input in the state process to align with the federal abandonment deadlines.

The Board's new advisory role would be facilitated if Board members were among those notified by INDOT when railroads file applications for abandonment. Currently, IC 8-3-1-21.1 requires INDOT to provide written notice of a railroad's intent to abandon a line to the County Commissioners, Mayor or Town Board, County Surveyor, Department of Commerce and Department of Natural Resources. The TCPB recommends that INDOT administratively add TCPB members and any affected Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to the notification list. Such notice would increase communication and provide an additional outlet for public awareness and involvement in the STB abandonment process.

In addition to the difficulties outlined above, lack of adequate funding has been another significant obstacle to state corridor preservation. Costs to acquire rail lines typically range from \$10,000 per mile at the lowest to \$1 million per mile or more in urban areas. Without access to substantial funds, or the ability to borrow funds for later repayment, INDOT and IDNR are largely unable to

railbank or otherwise purchase railroads threatened with abandonment.

Under current property rights laws and in light of recent court rulings, if corridors are not preserved during the initial abandonment process, they are lost through reversion. While the legislature could grant funds to INDOT for specific acquisitions, this would be difficult to accomplish in the short timeframes set by the STB due to the fact that abandonments are often approved in two months. The likelihood that a line could be abandoned between legislative sessions is high. Without a source of funds, Indiana would be unable to respond.

IC 8-4.5-3-7 contemplates the use of the Transportation Corridor Fund (TCF) to implement Indiana's corridor preservation program. However, the TCF has never received an appropriation or been tied to a dedicated funding source since it was created nearly eight years ago. The TCPB encourages INDOT and IDNR to develop a process that would permit either agency to acquire rail corridors as they become available and to seek appropriate funding to support that process.

The Board believes that rail corridor preservation, whether for continued freight service, intercity passenger service, local transit, bicycle or pedestrian transportation, recreational use, or utility corridors, is an important state function with policy implications that reach beyond local or regional impacts. In light of the obstacles to state corridor preservation efforts, a system of local preservation has evolved. Nevertheless, the TCPB wants to address obstacles to direct state involvements to define a statewide perspective on this issue.



## RAILBANKING

Railbanking is a way for railroad lines proposed for abandonment to be preserved by converting them to trail use for the interim. The National Trails System Act was amended in 1983 by Congress to create the railbanking program through the Surface Transportation Board (STB). At the time there was great concern about the rapid loss of the United States rail network. Many railroads are not built on land actually owned by the railroad company, but that was acquired by an easement. The terms of the easement often require that the land continue to be used for transportation, or it will revert to the property owner. Railbanking may be a solution satisfying these conditions by keeping the corridor intact. If future conditions (e.g., depletion of oil reserves) require relaying rails and ties or if corridors are needed for utilities, they will still be available for use.

By filing both a railbanking and public use condition request to the STB, the corridor's integrity is preserved by using it as a multiple-use trail. This scenario arises if the title to a rail corridor soon to be abandoned is in question and there is interest in the corridor being used as a trail. Many railroad rights-of-way contain easements that will revert back to the adjacent landowner once the line is abandoned and the abandonment process is completed. The filed request will allow the STB to intervene by placing a restriction on the abandonment. The railroad company is prevented from selling or disposing of any such property or related structures as bridges or culverts for 180 days after the abandonment is authorized.

Public agencies and qualified private organizations can request railbanking. All requests must be made to Washington D.C. and the requesting agency must submit a "Statement of Willingness to Assume Financial Responsibility". The abandoning railroad company must agree to negotiate a railbanking agreement, and, therefore, must be served a copy of the request at the same time it is submitted to the STB. Once an agreement is approved, the trail manager has time to solicit support and funding to purchase the rail line. Railbanking does not guarantee a free trail since the railroads will generally want to be compensated. Likewise, the railroads are generally given the option to re-purchase the corridor if they wish to use the lines for rail traffic once again.

## TRAILS MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Maintenance becomes more and more of an issue as trails age. With the limited amount of monies to create trails, it is very important that trail owners have a grasp of the "who, what, when, where and how" of maintaining them. The following items should be considered when developing a trail maintenance program. Additional tasks not mentioned may also be specific to a particular trail.

- Upkeep of trail signs and pavement markings
- Trimming of vegetation to maintain adequate sight distance and clearance

- Patching and grading of trail surfaces
- Cleaning of drainage structures
- Cleaning and sweeping of trail
- Inspection of trail structures
- Maintenance of lighting fixtures
- Routine trail inspection
- Litter and trash pick-up
- Snow removal
- Mowing of trail shoulders
- Timely removal of graffiti
- Repair and replacement of damaged trail benches and amenities

Maintaining trails begins with thoughtful planning followed by careful construction. If a trail is not well thought out and properly constructed maintenance will be time consuming thus costly. Building a sustainable trail keeps maintenance to a minimum. Consider cross slope, running slope, surfacing and water crossings (including bridges) and construction materials being used, to name a few. Alignment of the trail, examining soil types and drainage patterns are extremely important when deciding where to build a trail and how to maintain it. Consider the maintenance challenges occurring when utilizing a railroad right-of-way compared to a river greenway. In a greenway the existing plants, underlying soils and drainage each pose trail design challenges. Additionally, flooding and aftermath cleanup need to be examined. Constructing on an abandoned railbed should offer an established sub-base and fewer grade and drainage issues. Trail surface material impacts trail maintenance; therefore, surfacing is a main consideration.

A universally accessible trail allows use by persons with physical limitations or strollers. Creating an accessible trail requires a firm and stable surface. Popular choices for an accessible surface are asphalt/concrete or crushed limestone. Indiana has easy access to crushed limestone (73s or dusty 11s) which can be maintained firm and stable. This material is a mixture of small angular pieces which, due to the various sizes, packs densely when compacted. Rain and pedestrian traffic help keep the limestone screenings trail firm and stable. Using limestone screenings requires more daily maintenance. The cross slope and running slopes must be kept to a minimum. Ideally limestone screenings work best on a flat trail (2% slopes). Erosion of the surface is likely if crushed limestone is used on greater slopes. Gullies form and can wash out if not maintained.

Even on flat surfaces the trail may produce small holes that will need to be filled and tamped or preferably roll compacted. Each surface choice has maintenance benefits and shortcomings. Asphalt or concrete trails are long-lasting and much more self-maintaining. However, the long-term maintenance can be costly as it ages and deteriorates. Filling cracks, sealing the surface and keeping vegetation back are important. At some point the trail will need to be replaced or resurfaced. So, having a long term funding source for trail maintenance is important. Trail design and





## INDIANA TRAIL PROVIDERS

construction impact the service life of a trail.

Creating an adequate sub-base for the trail surface is critical. Such materials as geotextile fabric and vegetation barrier fabric used with soil have the ability to separate, filter, reinforce, protect and drain. These fabrics, used with proper stone size and depth, are essential when establishing a trail. The geotextile fabric can be particularly important in wetland or soft soil conditions. Recycled concrete is also an ideal sub-base material for a trail. The trail surface can be compared to a house in that a solid, substantial footer or foundation is the first part of a long lasting structure.

Beyond the edge of path surfaces are maintenance tasks, including litter pickup, graffiti removal, and caring for green space along the trail. When planning for trail maintenance, the edge has many aspects to consider that affect the physical effort and fiscal cost expended. Sustainability of the trail relates to those expenses. The amount of turf grass may be considered, or edge plantings can include less costly design solutions than turf grasses that require higher maintenance costs including mowing, fertilizing and irrigation. Less mowing and watering will cut fuel and maintenance costs. Planting prairie and native plants creates a mixed specie avenue for humans and wildlife. A variety of plant material attracts butterflies and birds enjoyed by trail users. In some places the edge may be restored to historical patterns of succession. To successfully integrate this method requires study and observation of the site. Trail users will need to accept this nontraditional look instead of a “mowed park”.

A restoration project requires knowledge of the historical disturbance regimes that occur in the local ecosystem. If appropriate, re-introduce some disturbances back into the ecosystem such as controlled burning or invasive species removal. It is important to understand the successional stages of the ecosystem being managed. Take advantage of any research conducted relating to historical site conditions, including soils, climate, vegetation and disturbance. Conduct a site analysis to help decide if long term maintenance should include disturbances and succession management. Remember that species composition, ecosystem structure and function are linked and

change during succession.

Another consideration is who will perform the required tasks. Some not-for-profit groups are maintaining their trails with volunteers. A few paid staff may coordinate activity but the majority of the work is accomplished by concerned citizens who take time out of their lives to maintain the trail. Taking active ownership of the trail is one reason Cardinal Greenway is well maintained. Some not-for-profits and public entities have created “Adopt a Trail/Greenway/Path” programs where citizens may care for a section of trail to be maintained by groups, schools, businesses or organizations, etc. Taking a page from local soil and water conservation districts, centrally located special use trail equipment in INDOT districts around the state could be loaned to qualified operators for maintenance support by volunteers and weekend maintenance events. Trail systems are maintained while costs are offset through equipment sharing.

In other instances Park and Recreation departments maintain the trail completely or use volunteers, work release programs, prison labor, or a combination of the above. Some Department of Public Works or Street Departments, depending on the trail location and jurisdiction control, will maintain trails. City or county highway and road departments have become more active in trail maintenance due to direct correlation between trails and transportation. As they maintain the road, why not care for the trail that runs along the road? Where trails are built on levees, some levee authorities maintain them.

Trail edge and/or the trail surface may be maintained by utility companies where their services exist under or over a trail. Money from the lease or easement from such utilities could be used. Other entities managing trails establish maintenance endowments that ensure that both short term and long term maintenance needs are met.

Building trails for Indiana trail users and visitors adds a valuable outdoor recreation resource to our communities. However, sustainability and usefulness depends on trail stewardship. The commitment to long term maintenance is as important as the creation of the trail. Thoughtful planning, careful construction and lasting maintenance of trails will help ensure an enjoyable, healthy and pleasing resource for everyone.





**Abandoned and railbanked railroad lines in Indiana (INDOT, 2005)**

